NPT/CONF.2015/PC.III/18

Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Distr.: General
1 May 2014

Original: English

Third session
New York, 28 April-9 May 2014

Report by the facilitator to the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Preparations for the Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction

1. Since his previous report (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/10) to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held from 22 April to 3 May 2013, the facilitator has continued, in accordance with his mandate, to consult with the States of the Middle East region in support of the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, as well as undertaking preparations for the convening of the Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

2. Consultations and other meetings have been actively pursued with States in the region and internationally. The facilitator believes that these numerous consultations and other events have contributed to better awareness and understanding of the importance of the Conference process, its possibilities and its implications for peace and stability in the Middle East region and beyond.

3. Between October 2013 and February 2014, the facilitator, together with the conveners of the Conference and with the participation of States of the region, held three informal meetings in Glion, Switzerland, in order to facilitate agreement among the States of the region on the arrangements for the Conference, which is to be held in Helsinki. The meetings provided an opportunity for an exchange of views on the Conference and preparations for it, including discussions on the agenda, modalities and rules of procedure. Participants contributed actively to the dialogue and presented proposals. The conveners and the facilitator were impressed by the participants' readiness to engage, their desire to make progress and their open and constructive approach.

14-31826 (E) 050514

Please recycle

4. At the same time, divergent views persist regarding important aspects of the Conference. More work is therefore needed, and all parties are strongly encouraged to engage in the process with a continued constructive attitude and readiness to find the necessary compromises.

5. Since the facilitator's previous report, a number of civil society actors, academic institutions and think tanks have continued to organize events and other important activities in support of the convening of the Conference and the fostering of regional dialogue. These activities have contributed positively to the Conference preparations. The requested background documentation regarding modalities for a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, provided by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, taking into account work previously undertaken and experience gained, remains available for the Conference.

Convening of the Conference

6. The conveners remain committed to the goal of achieving a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and reaffirm their commitment to convening the Conference with the participation of all States of the region. The conveners aim to convene the Conference without delay once arrangements for the Conference have been freely arrived at by the States of the region and hope that such a consensus can be reached in 2014. Finland, as the host Government, remains prepared to host the Conference at short notice.

Next steps

7. Consultations with the States of the region will continue. The facilitator and the conveners will host further informal meetings in order to focus on the preparations for the Conference, including its agenda, modalities, rules of procedure and timing. To build on the progress made, active input and contributions by all States of the region are needed in order to arrive at an early agreement on the arrangements for the Conference.

8. The facilitator and the conveners will continue to encourage all States of the region to remain positively engaged and to take full advantage of the progress made so far. All parties concerned are encouraged to use the potential of the process to contribute to the security and stability of the Middle East region and to enable partners to initiate gradual change in the region, from confrontation to cooperation, with important implications for wider interests of regional and international peace.